

Claims in contention:

This is **not** a listing of claims. This copy of Claim 5 is presented for convenience sake.

Claim 5 (*Previously Presented*): A method for configuring a Programmably-Sliceable Switch-fabric Unit (PSSU) having a capability of functioning as an $N \times N$ ' crossbar, where said PSSU also has a capability of being programmably sliced to instead function as a plurality of $S \times S$ ' virtual switch slices, where $S < N$ and $S' < N$, where the PSSU includes absolute Ingress ports (aI 's) and absolute Egress ports (aE 's) that are alternatively identifiable as Relative ingress ports (Ri 's) and Relative egress ports (Re 's) of respective ones of said virtual switch slices; where the aI 's can receive routing requests and payloads that are to be routed, and where the aE 's can output routed payloads to corresponding destinations; and where said configuring method comprises:

(a) programming **the** PSSU to be sliced such that its plural virtual slices are **intermingled** to provide **effective uncrossings** of ingress and/or egress signal lines of the PSSU.